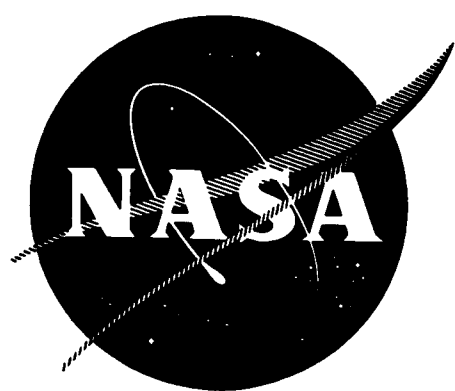


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FACILITY FORM 602

# EVALUATION PROGRAM for SECONDARY SPACECRAFT CELLS

ACCEPTANCE TEST OF  
 GULTON INDUSTRIES INCORPORATED  
 3.5 AMPERE-HOUR NICKEL CADMIUM CELLS  
 WITH PLITT TERMINAL SEAL

prepared for  
 GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER  
 7 CONTRACT W11252B



QUALITY EVALUATION LABORATORY  
 NAD CRANE, INDIANA

2-QUALITY EVALUATION LABORATORY 3  
UNITED STATES NAVAL AMMUNITION DEPOT  
CRANE, INDIANA 2

EVALUATION PROGRAM  
FOR  
SECONDARY SPACECRAFT CELLS

ACCEPTANCE TEST  
OF  
Δ GULTON Δ INDUSTRIES, Δ INCORPORATED  
3.5 AMPERE-HOUR SEALED NICKEL CADMIUM CELLS  
WITH THE PLITT SEAL

18B QE/C 66-709 END

18 November 1966

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

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Enclosure (1)

REPORT BRIEF

GULTON 3.5 AMPERE-HOUR SEALED NICKEL CADMIUM

SECONDARY SPACECRAFT CELLS

WITH THE PLITT SEAL

- Ref: (a) National Aeronautics and Space Administration Purchase Order Number W11,252B  
(b) NASA ltr BRA/VBK/pad of 25 September 1961 w/BUWEPS first end FQ-1:WSK of 2 October 1961 to CO NAD Crane  
(c) Preliminary Work Statement for Battery Evaluation Program of 25 August 1961

I. TEST ASSIGNMENT BRIEF.

A. In compliance with references (a) and (b), evaluation of Gulton Industries, Inc. 3.5 ampere-hour secondary spacecraft cells was begun according to the program outline of reference (c). These cells utilized a polymerized neoprene compression seal developed by Karl Plitt of Goddard Space Flight Center.

B. The object of this evaluation program is to gather specific information concerning secondary spacecraft cells. Information concerning performance characteristics and limitations, including cycle life under various electrical and environmental conditions, will be of interest to power systems designers and users. Cell weaknesses, including causes of failure of present designs, will be of interest to suppliers as a guide to product improvement.

C. Forty-two 3.5 ampere-hour cells (manufacturer's rating) were purchased from Gulton Industries, Inc., Metuchen, New Jersey, by National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and include the new Plitt sealing technique.

II. CONCLUSIONS.

A. From the results of this test, it can be concluded that:

1. The new polymerized neoprene compression seals are satisfactory as evidenced by no leakers out of the 42 cells tested.

2. The capacity of 41 of the 42 cells was in the acceptable range of 3.50 to 4.38 ampere-hours while that of the remaining cell had a capacity of only 2.65 ampere-hours.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS.

A. It is recommended that these Gulton Industries, Inc. 3.5 ampere-hour cells utilizing the Plitt seal be accepted on the basis of the acceptance test results.

RESULTS OF ACCEPTANCE TESTS

OF

3.5 AMPERE-HOUR NICKEL CADMIUM SECONDARY SPACECRAFT CELLS

MANUFACTURED BY

GULTON INDUSTRIES, INC.

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. On 1 September 1966, this activity began acceptance tests on 42 cells. These tests were completed on 5 October 1966.

II. TEST CONDITIONS.

A. All acceptance tests were performed at an ambient temperature between 23° C and 27° C at existing relative humidity and atmospheric pressure, and consisted of the following:

1. Phenolphthalein Leak Test.
2. Capacity Test.
3. Cell Short Test.
4. Immersion Seal Test.
5. Overcharge Test.
6. Internal Resistance Test.
7. Immersion Seal Test.

B. All charging and discharging was done at constant current ( $\pm 5$  percent). Cells were charged in series but discharged individually.

III. CELL IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION.

A. The cells were identified by the manufacturer's serial numbers which were from 101 to 154 although not consecutively.

B. The 3.5 ampere-hour "D" cell is cylindrical with an average diameter of 1.307 inches and an average overall length of 2.609 inches including the positive terminal. The average weight was 165.4 grams. Figure 1 is a photograph of the Gulton Industries, Inc. 3.5 ampere-hour "D" cell with the Plitt seal.

C. The cell container or can, and the cell cover are made of cold rolled steel. The can itself serves as the negative terminal. The positive terminal is an 8-24 threaded extension of the positive plate tab through the center of the cover. The positive terminal is insulated from the "negative" cover by the Plitt seal.

D. These cells, rated by the Manufacturer at 3.5 ampere-hours, were supplied in a discharged (each with shorting wire) condition.

#### IV. TEST PROCEDURE AND RESULTS.

##### A. Phenolphthalein Leak Test:

1. The phenolphthalein leak test is a determination of the condition of the welds and Plitt seal on receipt of the cells. This test was performed with a phenolphthalein spray indicator solution of one-half of one percent concentration.

(a) There were no signs of leakage on any of the 42 cells subjected to the leak test.

##### B. Capacity Test:

1. The capacity test is a determination of the cell capacity at the  $c/2$  discharge rate, where  $c$  is the manufacturer's rated capacity, to a cutoff voltage of 1.00 volt per cell. The discharge was made after a 1-hour open circuit period following the 16-hour charge at the  $c/10$  rate. A total of three capacity checks were made at this activity. The cells were discharged individually, but were recharged in series.

2. Since complete capacity data was not submitted by the manufacturer, it was not possible to compare the manufacturer's results with those of this activity. The individual cell capacities ranged from 2.65 to 4.38 ampere-hours for an average of 4.01 ampere-hours to 1.00 volt. The cell capacities are tabulated in Table I. Characteristic 2-hour rate discharge curves are shown in Figure 2.

##### C. Cell Short Test:

1. The cell short test is a means of detecting slight shorting conditions which may exist because of imperfections in the insulating materials or damage to the element in handling or assembly.

2. Following completion of the third capacity discharge test, each individual cell was loaded with a resistor of value giving a  $c/1$  to  $c/5$  discharge rate and allowed to stand 16 hours with the resistor acting as a shorting device. At the end of 16 hours, the resistors

were removed and the cells placed on open circuit stand for 24 hours. Any cell whose voltage did not recover to 1.15 volts or higher was rejected.

3. The open circuit cell voltages, 24 hours after removal of the shorting resistors, ranged from 1.19 to 1.24 volts for an average of 1.22 volts.

4. There were no rejects of any of the cells subjected to the cell short test. The voltage values for the 42 cells are shown in Table I.

D. Immersion Seal Test:

1. The immersion seal test is a means of detecting leakage of a seal or weld. The test was performed before and after the overcharge test sequence to determine the presence and cause of leaks.

2. The cells were placed under water in a bell jar container. A vacuum of 20 inches of mercury was held for 3 minutes. Cells discharging a steady stream of bubbles were considered rejects.

3. There were no rejects in the 42 cells subjected to the immersion seal test.

E. Overcharge Test:

1. The overcharge tests were performed to determine the steady state voltage at specified rates. The test specified a series of constant current charges at c/20, c/10 and c/5 rates, for a minimum of 48 hours at each charge rate or until the increase of the "on-charge" voltage was less than 10 millivolts per day.

2. The cells were monitored hourly throughout the test. Charging was to be discontinued on cells which exceeded 1.50 volts while on charge. There was no need to remove any cells from the charging sequence.

3. The steady state voltage at the end of each 48 hour charge rate test is shown in Table I. Characteristic overcharge voltage curves are shown in Figure 3.

F. Internal Resistance Test:

1. This test was performed to determine the internal resistance of the cells.

2. At the completion of the overcharge test; the cells were returned to the  $c/20$  charging rate and given a short pulse (5-10 seconds) at a rate of  $c$  in amperes. The cell voltages,  $V_1$ , immediately prior to the pulse; and  $V_2$ , 5 milliseconds after the pulse, were read on a suitable recording instrument. A CEC high speed recorder (28.8 inches of tape per second) was used. The internal resistance of the cell in ohms was calculated according to the following formula.

$$R = \frac{V_2 - V_1}{I_c - I_c/20}$$

$V_1$  and  $V_2$  are in volts,  $I_c$  and  $I_c/20$  are in amperes.

3. The internal resistance value for each cell is shown in Table I. The values range from 3.01 to 12.03 milliohms.

## GULTON 3.5 AMPERE-HOUR PLITT SEAL

TABLE I

| CELL<br>NUMBER | DIAMETER<br>(INCHES) | LENGTH<br>(INCHES) | WEIGHT<br>(GRAMS) | CAPACITY<br>TEST<br>(A.H.) | CAPACITY<br>TEST<br>(A.H.) | CAPACITY<br>TEST<br>(A.H.) | CELL SHORT<br>TEST<br>(VOLTS) | IMMERSION<br>SEAL TEST | OVERCHARGE<br>c/20<br>(VOLTS) | OVERCHARGE<br>c/10<br>(VOLTS) | OVERCHARGE<br>c/5<br>(VOLTS) | INTERNAL<br>RESISTANCE<br>(MILLIOHMS) | IMMERSION<br>SEAL TEST |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 101            | 1.312                | 2.610              | 162.2             | 3.78                       | 3.58                       | 3.27                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.43                          | 1.43                         | 3.01                                  | O.K.                   |
| 102            | 1.309                | 2.615              | 167.8             | 4.20                       | 4.20                       | 3.85                       | 1.21                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.42                          | 1.42                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 103            | 1.308                | 2.620              | 162.2             | 4.13                       | 3.97                       | 3.64                       | 1.21                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.41                          | 1.41                         | 3.01                                  | O.K.                   |
| 104            | 1.312                | 2.600              | 163.1             | 4.16                       | 4.28                       | 3.91                       | 1.21                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.41                          | 1.41                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 106            | 1.306                | 2.612              | 163.4             | 4.07                       | 3.88                       | 3.55                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.41                          | 1.41                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 107            | 1.310                | 2.605              | 163.0             | 4.13                       | 4.23                       | 3.94                       | 1.21                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.41                          | 1.41                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 108            | 1.305                | 2.605              | 164.1             | 3.97                       | 4.11                       | 3.78                       | 1.21                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.41                          | 1.40                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 109            | 1.312                | 2.610              | 163.9             | 4.21                       | 4.05                       | 3.73                       | 1.21                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.41                          | 1.42                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 110            | 1.305                | 2.608              | 164.0             | 4.20                       | 4.38                       | 3.97                       | 1.19                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.42                          | 1.41                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 111            | 1.306                | 2.606              | 163.7             | 4.20                       | 4.28                       | 3.99                       | 1.20                          | O.K.                   | 1.40                          | 1.42                          | 1.42                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 112            | 1.309                | 2.610              | 164.4             | 4.32                       | 4.26                       | 4.00                       | 1.22                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.42                          | 1.41                         | 3.01                                  | O.K.                   |
| 113            | 1.306                | 2.600              | 163.5             | 4.23                       | 4.02                       | 3.76                       | 1.22                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.42                          | 1.41                         | 3.01                                  | O.K.                   |
| 114            | 1.307                | 2.608              | 162.3             | 4.26                       | 4.11                       | 3.85                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.41                          | 1.41                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 115            | 1.305                | 2.604              | 164.8             | 4.26                       | 4.11                       | 3.85                       | 1.22                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.42                          | 1.42                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 116            | 1.307                | 2.612              | 164.5             | 4.23                       | 4.05                       | 3.79                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.42                          | 1.41                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 117            | 1.305                | 2.625              | 164.9             | 4.26                       | 4.14                       | 3.88                       | 1.22                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.42                          | 1.42                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 118            | 1.308                | 2.601              | 163.7             | 4.23                       | 4.05                       | 3.79                       | 1.22                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.42                          | 1.41                         | 3.01                                  | O.K.                   |
| 119            | 1.310                | 2.614              | 163.2             | 4.26                       | 4.08                       | 3.85                       | 1.22                          | O.K.                   | 1.41                          | 1.42                          | 1.42                         | 3.01                                  | O.K.                   |
| 122            | 1.305                | 2.611              | 171.4             | 3.94                       | 3.79                       | 3.56                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.42                          | 1.43                          | 1.42                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 123            | 1.305                | 2.604              | 159.5             | 2.65                       | 2.60                       | 2.48                       | 1.21                          | O.K.                   | 1.44                          | 1.45                          | 1.45                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 125            | 1.312                | 2.616              | 171.0             | 3.56                       | 3.41                       | 3.03                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.43                          | 1.44                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |

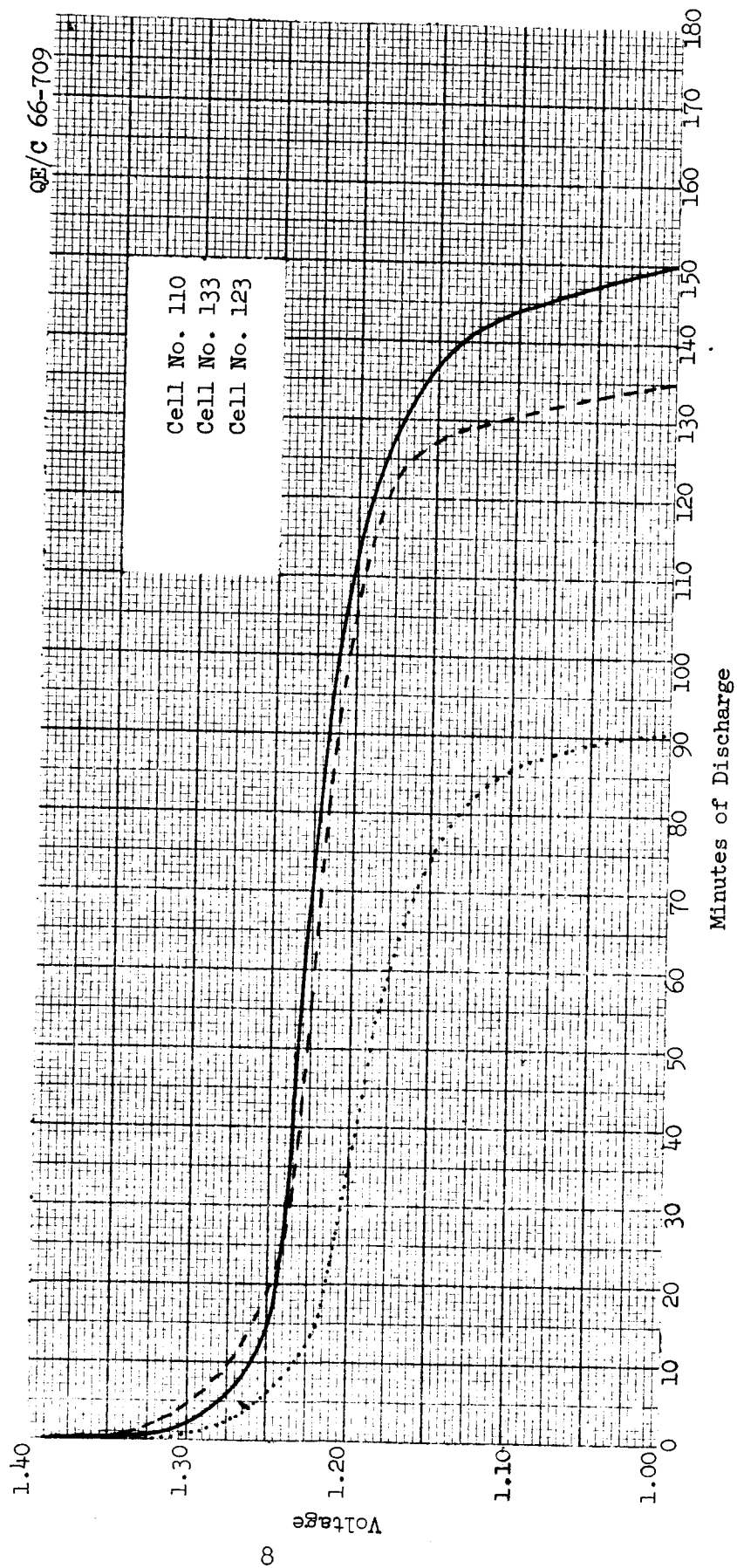


TABLE I (Contd)

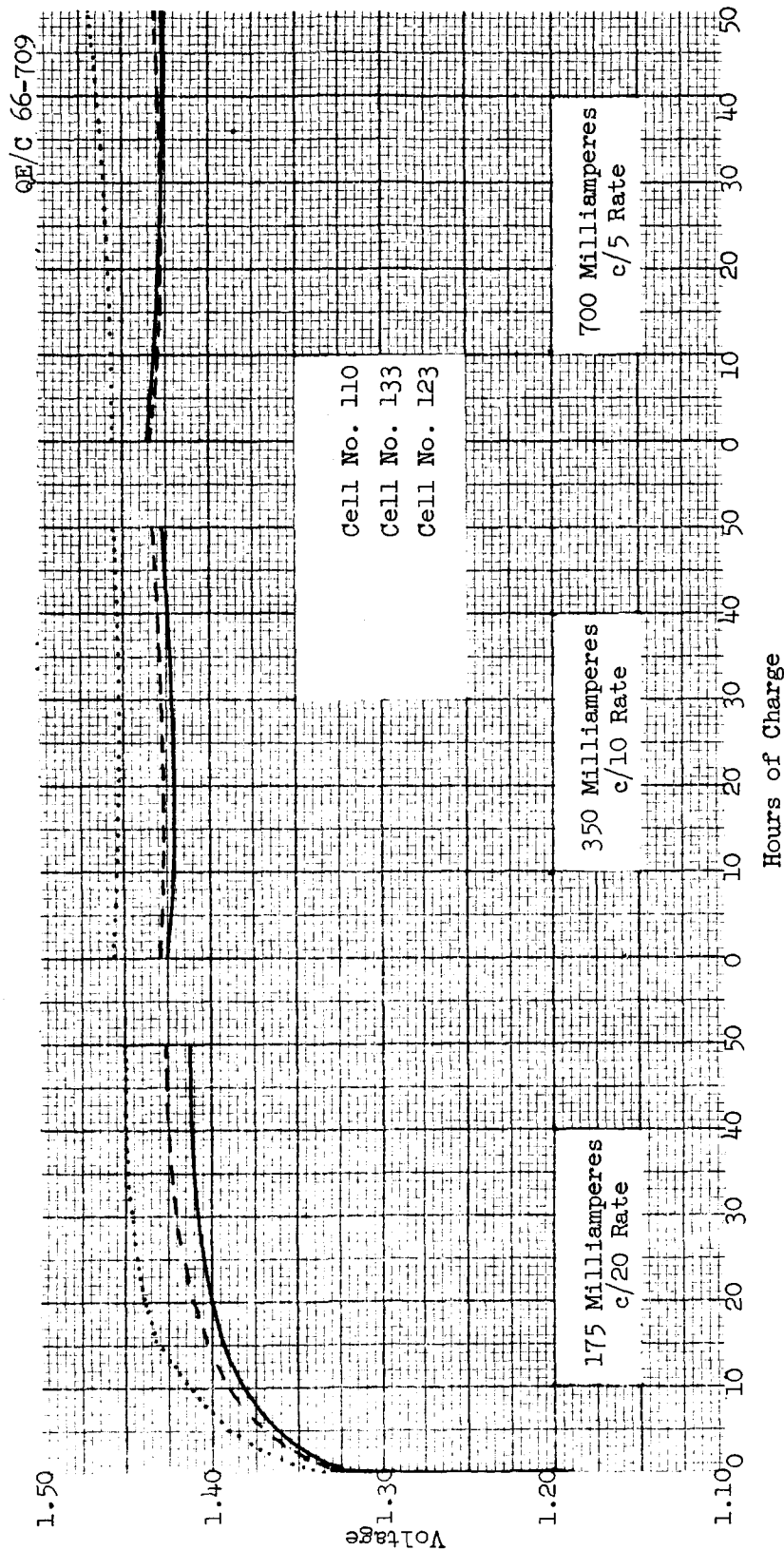
| CELL<br>NUMBER | DIAMETER<br>(INCHES) | LENGTH<br>(INCHES) | WEIGHT<br>(GRAMS) | CAPACITY<br>TEST<br>(A.H.) | CAPACITY<br>TEST<br>(A.H.) | CAPACITY<br>TEST<br>(A.H.) | CELL SHORT<br>TEST<br>(VOLTS) | IMMERSION<br>SEAL TEST | OVERCHARGE<br>c/20<br>(VOLTS) | OVERCHARGE<br>c/10<br>(VOLTS) | OVERCHARGE<br>c/5<br>(VOLTS) | INTERNAL<br>RESISTANCE<br>(MILLIOHMS) | IMMERSION<br>SEAL TEST |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 127            | 1.308                | 2.612              | 172.1             | 4.05                       | 3.85                       | 3.44                       | 1.24                          | O.K.                   | 1.42                          | 1.43                          | 1.43                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 129            | 1.310                | 2.616              | 168.2             | 3.62                       | 3.44                       | 3.06                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.43                          | 1.44                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 131            | 1.309                | 2.600              | 166.4             | 3.88                       | 3.68                       | 3.30                       | 1.24                          | O.K.                   | 1.42                          | 1.43                          | 1.43                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 132            | 1.305                | 2.602              | 164.4             | 3.94                       | 3.68                       | 3.24                       | 1.24                          | O.K.                   | 1.42                          | 1.43                          | 1.43                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 133            | 1.311                | 2.608              | 168.9             | 4.00                       | 3.82                       | 3.41                       | 1.24                          | O.K.                   | 1.42                          | 1.43                          | 1.44                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 134            | 1.303                | 2.614              | 169.0             | 3.94                       | 3.73                       | 3.33                       | 1.24                          | O.K.                   | 1.42                          | 1.43                          | 1.43                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 135            | 1.306                | 2.605              | 168.4             | 3.50                       | 3.44                       | 3.06                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.43                          | 1.44                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 139            | 1.305                | 2.605              | 163.0             | 3.79                       | 3.56                       | 3.18                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.42                          | 1.43                          | 1.43                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 140            | 1.304                | 2.620              | 164.7             | 3.79                       | 3.62                       | 3.21                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.43                          | 1.44                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 141            | 1.310                | 2.600              | 168.5             | 3.97                       | 3.76                       | 3.38                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.42                          | 1.42                          | 1.42                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 142            | 1.308                | 2.612              | 166.5             | 4.03                       | 3.73                       | 3.53                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.43                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 143            | 1.306                | 2.619              | 165.9             | 4.11                       | 3.94                       | 3.62                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.43                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 144            | 1.300                | 2.603              | 164.0             | 3.85                       | 3.85                       | 3.50                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.42                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 145            | 1.308                | 2.608              | 164.5             | 3.88                       | 3.65                       | 3.35                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.43                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 146            | 1.304                | 2.604              | 165.2             | 3.97                       | 3.68                       | 3.35                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.43                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 147            | 1.309                | 2.612              | 164.5             | 4.05                       | 3.88                       | 3.56                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.43                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 149            | 1.308                | 2.611              | 166.1             | 4.03                       | 3.82                       | 3.47                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.42                         | 12.03                                 | O.K.                   |
| 150            | 1.308                | 2.610              | 167.6             | 4.11                       | 3.91                       | 3.59                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.42                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 151            | 1.312                | 2.612              | 165.4             | 3.94                       | 3.68                       | 3.38                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.42                         | 6.02                                  | O.K.                   |
| 153            | 1.309                | 2.596              | 165.4             | 4.03                       | 3.79                       | 3.47                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.42                         | 12.03                                 | O.K.                   |
| 154            | 1.307                | 2.614              | 166.0             | 4.00                       | 3.76                       | 3.44                       | 1.23                          | O.K.                   | 1.43                          | 1.44                          | 1.43                         | 9.02                                  | O.K.                   |



FIGURE 1



CHARACTERISTIC 2-HOUR RATE DISCHARGE CURVES  
GULTON 3.5 AMPERE-HOUR NICKEL CADMIUM SEALED CELLS  
FIGURE 2



CHARACTERISTIC 48-HOUR OVERCHARGE CURVES

GULTON 3.5 AMPERE-HOUR NICKEL CADMIUM SEALED CELLS

FIGURE 3

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